AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A cosmetic or pharmaceutical composition comprising, in a physiologically acceptable medium, at least one purified, natural or synthetic polypeptide, the peptide sequence of which consists of at least one sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO : 4, SEQ ID NO : 5, and SEQ ID NO : 6[[,]] ~~and homologs thereof~~.

2. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein said polypeptide has a peptide sequence consisting of SEQ ID NO : 5 or SEQ ID NO : 6.

3. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein said polypeptide is in a dimeric or other multimeric form.

4. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein said polypeptide has undergone one or more post-translational modifications.

5. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in ~~claim 1~~ claim 2, wherein said polypeptide is ~~in the form of a polypeptide of sequence SEQ ID NO : 5 or SEQ ID NO : 6,~~ further fused with another polypeptide, a hydrophilic or hydrophobic targeting agent or a bioconversion precursor.

6-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently Amended) An isolated and purified polypeptide belonging to the aspartic acid protease family[[,]] ~~having a peptide sequence~~ consisting of SEQ ID NO : 6.

29. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 28, having an apparent molecular mass of between 5 and 30 kD.

30. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 28, which is in a dimeric or other multimeric form.

31. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 28, having a theoretical isoelectric point of between 3 and 9.

32. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 28, said polypeptide being of natural origin and purified from mammalian tissues.

33. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 32, purified from human epidermis or other human skin.

34. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 28, which has undergone one or more post-translational modifications.

35. (Currently Amended) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 28 which is ~~in the form of a polypeptide of sequence SEQ ID NO : 6,~~ <u>further</u> fused with another polypeptide, a hydrophilic or hydrophobic targeting agent or a bioconversion precursor.

36.-45. (Cancelled)

46. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 29, having an apparent molecular mass of between 9 and 15 kD.

47. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide as claimed in claim 46, having an apparent molecular mass of between 11 and 14 kD.

48. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein said polypeptide ~~has the sequence consisting of~~ consists of SEQ ID NO: 6.

49-52. (Cancelled)

53. (Currently Amended) A method for degrading corneodesmosin in corneocytes comprising applying to corneocytes an effective corneodesmosin degrading amount of at least one polypeptide, the peptide sequence of which comprises at least one sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 4, SEQ ID NO: 5 and SEQ ID NO: 6 ~~and homologs thereof~~.